

# Knowing + Doing = Being



*Know+Do* publishes monthly *Think Papers* for its subscribers and clients highlighting different issues that promote the philosophy of **'knowing+doing=being'**. Our approach is: if you cannot define where you want to **BE**, how can you **KNOW** your plans are correct and what you are **DOING** will help you reach your goal? This is the first paper of our fifth series covering 'Sales Made Easier'.

For more information on *Know+Do's* services, solutions and resources view our website [www.knowanddo.com](http://www.knowanddo.com) or contact [info@knowanddo.com](mailto:info@knowanddo.com) / (0161) 280 4567

## Effective 'Non-Sales' Selling

### Think Paper No 1. Series 5: Sales Made Easier

Welcome to the fifth series of our popular *Think Papers*. The papers have been designed to capture our company values<sup>1</sup>, including sharing and simplicity. We aim to take topical areas of knowledge and share our thoughts and experiences of these in an accessible way to encourage you to take action. We welcome your feedback about how the publications have helped you or your teams.

This series – *Sales Made Easier* – is focussing upon the business of selling. A growing business will understand and be able to use the sales process to create clear advantages in their current marketplace and trading conditions. This series aims to make it easier for managers and their staff to engage and embrace a proactive sales culture that supports businesses to trade more successfully and sustainably.

#### What do we mean by selling?

The term 'sales' suffers from many misconceptions, for many people the visual image it creates is of characters like Swiss Tony, Arthur Daley or Del Boy, and the unannounced, unwanted telephone cold call. I'm sure you've all experienced a sales person who wasn't listening to what you said but seemed to be more interested in pushing a product they wanted to sell. Theirs is the domain of product based selling and all too often linked to the following view articulated by Dan Pink<sup>2</sup>:

*"To the smart set, sales is an endeavor that requires little intellectual throw weight— a task for slick glad-handers who skate through life on a shoeshine and a smile. To others it's the province of dodgy characters doing slippery things— a realm where trickery and deceit get the speaking parts while honesty and fairness watch mutely from the rafters. Still others view it as the white-collar equivalent of cleaning toilets— necessary perhaps, but unpleasant and even a bit unclean."*



<sup>1</sup> <http://knowanddo.com/about-us/values>

<sup>2</sup> Pink, Daniel H (2013-02-07). *To Sell is Human: The Surprising Truth About Persuading, Convincing, and Influencing Others* (Kindle Locations 70-74). Canongate Books. Kindle Edition.

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Selling is not just about product based sales but also about moving people, “*persuading, influencing and convincing others*” to go along with your idea/project, or with you personally. In Pink’s view, “*Physicians sell patients on a remedy. Lawyers sell juries on a verdict. Teachers sell students on the value of paying attention in class. Entrepreneurs woo funders...*” you get the picture.

Pink surveyed almost 10,000 workers to see if his own hunch was right and found that people spend 40% of their work time in non-sales activities, i.e. “*persuading, influencing, and convincing others,*” rather than direct sales. He also found that employees spent approximately 24 minutes of every hour on activities related to “*moving others,*” as it is considered, “*crucial to their professional success.*”

This might mean that more and more professionals are involved in sales yet they don’t yet realise it! This approach could cause issues though. An example may help to illustrate this point. During one of Know+Do’s leadership programmes<sup>3</sup> we did an exercise with twenty participants, who were all leaders of social businesses, asking them: “**How (and to whom) do you sell your organisation?**”

The following diagram reveals the answers from the group, after they had been coded and classified. It is insightful in that it visually demonstrates their tendency to focus on promoting their services to the audiences they serve (bottom left box in the diagram 1), at the expense of selling their business to those who invest in their work (top right box of diagram 1). The majority of those questioned saw themselves not involved in sales but preferred the term promotion.

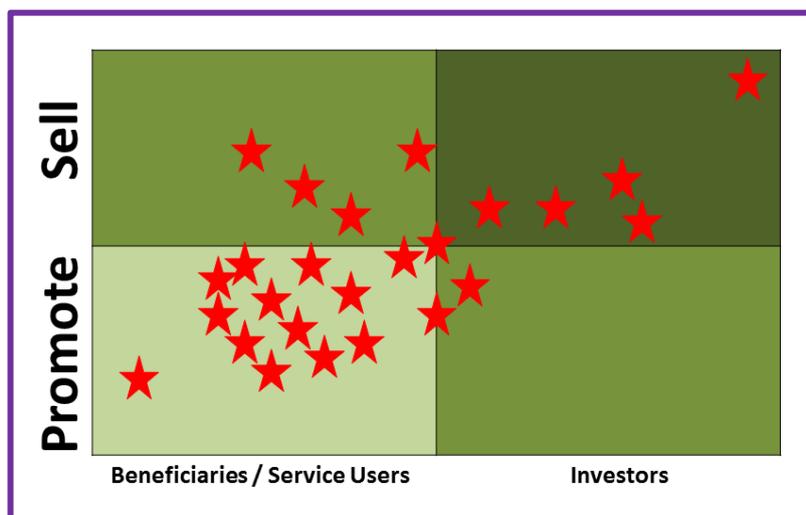


Diagram 1. Sales answers from Inspiring Leaders participants

When fed back, the diagram prompted a lively discussion with many individuals having a rather negative view of the word ‘selling’ as per Pink’s earlier comments. They saw it as something they didn’t do – e.g. saying, “how could it be selling when we offer some of our services free of charge?” However the services were not free, someone had to pay for them in the first place. Someone had to be sold on the idea that the services were needed and that their investment would make a difference.

<sup>3</sup> More information on *Inspiring Enterprising Leaders* can be found at: <http://knowanddo.com/archives/792>

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The point of the exercise was to see the perspective by which the leaders viewed and represented themselves in what was a rapidly changing marketplace, with traditional grant funding being replaced by competitive tendering. This would necessitate a massive shift towards the top right hand box in diagram 1 and for the language and approach of the organisations to change in order to meet the needs of the real customer base.

Pink's survey may have found that people are spending 40% of their time at work engaged in persuading, influencing, and convincing others in ways that don't involve anyone making a purchase (non-sales selling) but we need to be careful that where necessary, organisations make a clear distinction about the need to sell their services to ensure their continued survival.

**Know+Do consistently find that many organisations really struggle with this notion and find it difficult to sell themselves *and* their services clearly, precisely and quickly to prospective customers.**

It would seem that Pink's definition strays into the territory of marketing the organisation. But let's be clear here - marketing is not selling, and selling is not marketing. Marketing and selling are related, but they are different. Marketing is simply about creating awareness and keeping attention; it creates the space for a sale to happen. Selling, on the other hand, is the act of 'sealing the deal' or 'creating a customer.'

All companies have a requirement to ensure they generate more money than they spend in order to stay in business. Unless customers beat a direct path to your door you will have to sell your organisation and its products or services to prospective clients. **Q. Whose role is this within the organisation?** Pink's wider definition means that lots more people are involved in the non-sales selling function within an organisation. **Q. How do the non-sales functions interface with the direct sales function of the business?** **Q. Who is/are the deal closers in the business and at what point do they normally get involved?** All parts of the business need to be involved in constantly selling the business before, during and after the 'sale'.

The customer, whether a business or individual, is much better informed about the buying process now. A quick search on the internet can reveal the cheapest price possible for a product or service and customers can pick and choose. **Q. Are you clear about whom your 'customers' are?** **Q. Are you clear about what you sell, what your customers buy and why they buy it?**

The demise of many household names over the past few years like *Woolworths*, *Comet*, and *MySpace* reminds us that just being out there in the marketplace is not enough. Organisations have to sell themselves and their products and services profitably to sustain themselves. The internet has made the marketplace truly global but at its heart the sales process remains pretty similar. The old adage that 'people don't like to be sold but they love to buy' still rings true. All organisations need to work on creating an atmosphere where people want to (and can) buy easily.

Taking the time to answer the above questions could really help you and your organisation get a clearer idea of how the notion of sales is viewed and more importantly executed within the business. Positioning and understanding your approach to sales is paramount. Many individuals and organisations are caught up in existing systems and processes relating to sales that may not be the best systems to serve them moving forward.

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This *Think Paper* gives you an opportunity to stand back and re-look at how you and others in your business view and use sales and sales processes.

***ACTION! Using the blank template overleaf to assess your team's understanding of sales and marketing in your business. Share the blank template with your team and collate the results.***

***What gaps do you notice? What cross-over is apparent? What terminology and processes are people referring to?***

Once you have completed the activity you can start to identify any training, process or communication needs to improve the sales capacity within your team.

We would also advise that you consider some key operational definitions and perspectives for terms such as direct and non-direct selling, who is an ideal customer, what you sell, etc. and ensure that all staff are briefed on these. Future *Think Papers*<sup>4</sup> will cover these common sales questions and processes, in order to help managers and leaders think more about how they use sales to grow their organisations.

If you would like to explore how to enhance your organisational marketing and sales process, *Know+Do* offer in-house training on a range of business growth and management issues. We also have expert business coaches available to support leaders in business. For more information please contact us on [info@knowanddo.com](mailto:info@knowanddo.com) or call (0161) 280 4567.

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<sup>4</sup> Our online library of free *Think Papers* can be found at: <http://knowanddo.com/resources>

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## Sales Questions Exercise

Share these questions amongst your staff team and compare the answers at the end.

Questions	Answer	Suggested Actions
1. Whose role is it to sell your organisation and its products or services to prospective clients?		
2. How do the non-sales functions interface with the direct sales function of your business?		
3. Who is/are the deal closers in the business and at what point do they normally get involved?		
4. Are you clear about whom your 'customers' are?		
5. Are you clear about what you sell, what your customers buy and why they buy it?		